1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

individuals's father's kin and all of his (or her) mother's kin.[1] It will be observed that in this formulation a kindred is defined as spreading upwards and outwards from an individual standing at its centre or base. Strictly speaking then, one should refer only to personal kindreds for it is evident that no two individuals will have precisely the same relatives. However, if the relationships between themselves are excepted, the unmarried and unadopted members of the same sibling group do have exactly the same kindred. We may think then of a kindred as radiating out bilaterally from the children of an elementary family to include all those persons to whom relationship can be traced through both male and female links. The Iban kindred, therefore, is in no sense a corporate group; rather it is amorphous, with its borders vaguely defined, and unnamed except by reference to its personal focus. However, in Iban society, where the largest corporate kin group is the *bilek* family, kindreds are of great importance for it is bilateral kinship which provides the framework for the formation of long-house communities.

17. The Iban are a rigorously monogamous people. Iban *adat* permits the marriage of any two individuals (male and female) on the same generation level who are not siblings. It is fully permissible for cousins of the first, second, third or any other degree to marry should they so desire; and those of the first degree may be either parallel or cross-cousins. Marriage with close kin is preferred, and about 75% of all Iban marriages are within the kindred (i.e. within the range of first to fifth cousin). Again, marriage within the long-house community is permitted, and occurs almost as frequently as marriage between individuals belonging to different long-house communities.

18. Within every long-house community there is a core group of *bilek* families linked by close ties of cognatic kinship. These families are commonly those of the founders of the community, and their apartments are usually side by side in about the centre of the long-house. For example, in Rumah Nyala, which contained 25 *bilek* families, there was a compact bloc of 8 apartments whose families were all joined by relationships which were, for the most part, between siblings or first or second cousins. Moreover, each of the other 17 *bilek* of Rumah Nyala was related to one or more of this central bloc of 8 families which constituted, therefore, a kind of core around which the rest of the long-house was grouped. A similar sort of structure is to be found in most Iban communities. It is important to note however, that while each family is related to at least one other family, it seldom, if ever, occurs that there is anything approaching complete inter-relatedness among the families of a community. Again, if it keeps within kindred relationships, a family may move freely from one long-house to another, and this is a not uncommon occurrence. We may say then that a long-house community is a local confederation of autonomous *bilek* families based on cognatic kinship.

19. It is important to realize however, that despite the high degree of inter-relatedness that may exist among its component *bilek* families, a long-house community holds virtually no property in communal ownership, nor is there collective ownership of farm land. Again, there is an absence of economic activity by the long-house community as a corporate group. Nonetheless, membership of a long-house does impose upon a *bilek* family many duties and obligations, for it is universally accepted that the well-being of any community

[1] W. H. R. Rivers, "Social Organization," London, 1924, p. 16.

6: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

592 This brings us to another fundamental feature of the Iban family system. It will be obvious that partition is out of the question if a family has only one child, for this individual is then the sole heir. In other words, partition only occurs when a *bilek* family contains two or more siblings. Furthermore, without exception, a brother or sister of the seceding sibling is always left behind in the ancestral *bilek*.[27] This permits us to formulate the general rule that partition always involves the break-up of a sibling group. Here, I would submit, we have a principle of cardinal importance, for it defines in precise terms the essential character of *bilek* family partition as it exists among the Iban.

Summarily then, we may say that partition consists of the secession of a son (or daughter), with spouse and children, from his (or her) natal *bilek*, this natal *bilek* being left in the possession of his (or her) parents and their remaining children and grandchildren.

THE DIVISION OF THE FAMILY ESTATE

592 A brief word may now be said concerning the way in which the partition of a *bilek* estate is achieved. Under Iban *adat*, the *bilek* is, in general, a partible 421 estate. Thus, as we have seen, should a sibling and spouse elect to part company with the other members of the family, it is recognized that they have a lawful and undeniable claim to a proportionate share of the conglomeration of property and other rights which make up the inheritable possessions of the *bilek*. But there are certain exceptions of the greatest consequence, for two ritual objects, in particular, are strictly non-partible. Both are associated with the growing of rice.

592 In Iban eyes, rice (*padi*) is by far the most precious thing which they possess: it is the main source from which wealth flows, and upon its successful 778 cultivation all well-being depends. To the Iban, however, the cultivation of rice is not so much a problem in agricultural method as a problem in ritual knowledge and skill. Their *padi*, so the Iban believe, is a spirit, and a farmer's success depends pre-eminently on his ability to order his dealings with the *padi* spirits in such a way as to win their approval, and so to attract to himself the bountiful crops that all men desire. To this end, the Iban have, through the centuries, devised a series of most elaborate rites. Almost all of these [796] rites are focused upon a strain of sacred rice known as *padi pun*. Each year a tiny patch of this sacred rice is sown in the centre of the farm clearing, and there is performed the intricate sequence of magico-religious rituals upon which rests the fertility of all the *padi* that has been planted. Here, however, we are concerned only with the fact that every *bilek* family has its own particular variety of sacred rice. Unlike ordinary kinds of rice, *padi pun* is never sold or given away, for this would be to dissipate its magical efficacy

542 This Table illustrates the overall importance of affines in economic organization, but in many instances they are even more important than these general figures indicate. Thus in about 30% of the 107 *bilek-families* of our three long-houses, the only adult male capable of undertaking the heavy work of farming (i.e. felling the forest, dibbling, and carrying in and threshing the grain) was an affine; while in another 25%, the only adult female capable of performing the essential tasks of sowing, weeding and reaping was similarly an affine. In other words, more than half of the 107 *bilek-families* would have encountered grave difficulty in subsisting had they been deprived of their affinal members.

Incorporation.

542 587 41. We now come to the fourth principle of recruitment, that of *incorporation*, which arises directly from the institution of marriage. It very occasionally happens that when a divorced woman contracts a second marriage and takes up virilocal domicile, she brings to live with her a child by a former husband. This child thus becomes incorporated into the *bilek-family* of which its mother is a member by right of marriage alone. However if the marriage becomes a stable and enduring one, the incorporated child acquires full jural membership, and has the same rights of inheritance as do any other children subsequently born into the family. Incorporation is a rare phenomenon. It occurred in only three of the 107 *bilek-families* of Rumah Nyala, Rumah Sibat and Rumah Tungku, there being one case in each of the three long-houses. Only four individuals were involved, and they were all girls.

The Principles of Inheritance.

542 428 42. Having briefly described the composition of the *bilek-family*, and the way in which its members are recruited, we may now examine the principles governing inheritance. Let us begin by considering the position of natal and adopted members of the family. As has been already stressed, children become members, by right of birth, of either their father's or their mother's *bilik*—but it must be one or the other. Thus the children of a man practising uxorilocal residence are the members of their mother's natal *bilek*, and of this local group alone. They have no rights of inheritance within their father's natal *bilek*, of which they are not resident members. Similarly, the children of a woman practising virilocal residence are the members of their father's local group, and have no rights of inheritance in their mother's natal *bilek*. Adopted children are members of the *bilek* into which they have been adopted, and of this *bilek* only.

43. The general rule for both natural and adopted children is this: as long as they remain resident members of their own *bilek-families*, sons and daughters possess full and equal rights of inheritance. In other words, within the *bilek*, siblings are parceners,or coheirs. There is thus no recognition of primogeniture, and no differentiation between the sexes, or between natural and adopted children. The equivalence of siblings is well expressed in the phrase: '*menyadi tampong pala*' which the Iban use to describe them. This phrase has the literal meaning: 'siblings whose heads are joined,' i.e. they are conceived of as a unified group. Another much used phrase is: '*menyadi begulai pemai*,' meaning, 'siblings of common inheritance.'

44. However, should a man, upon marriage, leave his natal *bilek*, he thereby relinquishes permanent rights of inheritance in this unit, but acquires similar rights in the *bilek-family* into which he marries and settles down. The same applies to a woman who marries out of her natal *bilek*. An affine then, acquires parcenary rights within the *bilek* of which he or she is a resident member.

45. Thus all the members of a *bilek-family*—natal, adopted and affinal—are homologous units within an antonomous, corporate group. As the Iban themselves put it: 'Whoever stands by the *bilek* (i.e. remains a member) he (or she) possesses the belongings, possesses the valuables' ('*Sapa tan ka bilek, iya empu utai, empu keresa*'). This was an actual statement made during the course of a gathering held at Rumah Nyala in June, 1950. The purpose of this formal meeting (*baum*) was to discuss the conditions which were to govern the adoption of an infant boy, and [597] the statement was made by one of the men of the adopting *bilek-family*. It is an affirmation that as long as the adopted child elected to remain resident in their *bilek*, he would possess identical rights of inheritance with the other members of the family. This fundamental principle of inheritance was reiterated many times during the course of the discussion (as it always is on such occasions), and all those present were called upon to witness that the members of the adopting *bilek-family* were publicly expressing their concurrence. To clinch the matter another of the men put it even more trenchantly by saying: 'Whoever stands by the *bilek* even though he (or she) be a Kayan, a Bukitan, a Punan, or an Ukit, he (or she) is the one who inherits the property' ('*Sapa tan ka bilek, Kayan, Pakatan, Punan, Ukit—enda ibor, iya empu keresa*'). Now the Kayans, the Bukitans, the Punans and the Ukits are other tribes of the Rejang headwaters; all are alien, and the Kayans and Ukits, in particular, are the bitter traditional enemies of the Iban. When this is realized, the strength of the utterance just quoted will be appreciated, for it claims that even an enemy, should he come to live in an Iban *bilek*, would, if he maintained his residence, possess equal rights of inheritance with the other members of the family.

542 421 46. As these statements suggest, the *bilek* is looked upon as a distinct entity comprising one apartment of a long-house, all the valued property which is stored within it, and all the various land and other rights attached to it. The *bilek* property usually includes: Chinese jars (some of considerable antiquity), bronze gongs—large and small, weapons and tools, smoked heads, woven fabrics, ancient beads, ceremonial head-dresses and attire, brass cannons and boxes, and the like. Then again, there are the more perishable objects needed in everyday life: dug-out canoes, mats of many kinds, cooking utensils, and all the varied equipment required in the cultivation and handling of *padi*. And, perhaps most important of all in Iban eyes, there are the magical charms and plants, the several strains of sacred and ritual *padi*, and the land rights vested in the *bilek*. All these things make up the *bilek* which persists through time, and which, from generation to generation, is owned and managed by the *bilek-family*.

The Partition of Bilek property.

70. What then are the principles which govern the partition of the property and other rights which constitute a *bilek*? Of cardinal importance is the principle that siblings are parceners, or coheirs. This rule applies to all brothers and sisters who are resident members of the *bilek*. Equally important is the acknowledgement in Iban customary law (*adat*) that the *bilek* is, in general, a partible estate. Should a sibling and spouse, for example, elect to part company with the other members of a family, it is recognized that they have a lawful and undeniable claim to a proportionate share of the conglomeration of property and other rights which make up the inheritable possessions of the *bilek*. But there are certain exceptions of the greatest consequence, for two ritual objects, in particular, are strictly non-partible. Both are associated with the growing of *padi*. 592 421

71. In Iban eyes *padi* is by far the most precious thing which they possess; it is the main source from which wealth flows, and upon its successful cultivation all well-being depends. To the Iban however, the cultivation of *padi* is not so much a problem in agricultural method, as a problem in ritual knowledge and skill. *Padi* is a spirit, and a farmer's success depends pre-eminently on his ability to order his dealings with the *padi* spirits in such a way as to win their approval, and attract to himself the bountiful crops which all men desire. To this end, the Iban have, through the centuries, devised a series of most elaborate rites. All of these rites are focussed upon a strain of sacred rice, known as *padi pun*. Each year a tiny patch of this *padi pun* is sown in the centre of the farm, and here are performed the intricate sequence of magico-religious rituals upon which, it is believed, rests the fertility of all the padi that has been planted. At this stage however, we are concerned with the fact that every *bilek-family* has its own particular variety of *padi pun*. Unlike ordinary kinds of rice, *padi pun* is never sold or given away, for this would be to dissipate its magical efficacy, acquired during the countless rituals carried out by past generations. In addition to its *padi pun*, a *bilek-family* also possesses three or four subsidary strains of sacred *padi*. These are termed *sangking*, and each year they are sown in small plots immediately around the *padi pun* itself. Although all rituals are focussed primarily on the *padi pun*, the several *sangking* also fall within their ambit. It is rather as if the *padi pun* were the eldest of a band of brothers. Every different *padi pun* has a personal name peculiar to itself, and the same applies to all the different kinds of *sangking*. For example, Kubu's *bilek*, of Rumah Nyala, possessed a *padi pun* called Letop, and four *sangking* named Bauk, Segendang, Pinang and Mawang. It is one of the axioms of Iban *adat* that the *padi pun* of a *bilek* is non-partible. What then is the solution when a family subdivides into two separate households? Briefly, it is this: the senior section retains possession of the *padi pun*, while the junior and emergent section is presented with one of the *sangking*, which is then elevated to become its *padi pun*. This is clearly a matter of crucial importance in the study of the process of *bilek-family* formation in Iban society. The senior section of a family is always definable by the fact that its *padi pun* was inherited as *padi pun* from the previous generation: while the *padi pun* of a junior section was inherited as *sangking*. By studying the inheritance of *padi pun* and *sangking* therefore, it is always possible to establish the main line of a family, and the various offshoots from it, which have been brought about by partition. 592 422 341 178

72. A second non-partible object is the *batu pemanggol*—a ritual whetstone, which is the centrepiece of the rites that initiate the yearly farming cycle, and the most important charm which a family owns. A few Iban families still possess whetstones upon which human victims—captives taken in war—were once sacrificed. Such stones are called *batu jaum*, and are immeasureably valuable in Iban estimation. To divide a *batu pemanggol* would be to destroy it, and so, when partiton takes place, it is always retained by the senior section of the *bilek*. The junior section, seeking an auspicious occasion, gathers a suitable looking stone from the riverbed. With a great show of solemnity, the new stone is touched on the old, and then consecrated; tutelary spirits are invoked and offerings made, and finally a pig (or cock) is sacrificed upon its surface. When partition occurs then, the senior section of the family always retains the ancestral *padi pun* and *batu pemanggol*. It may also happen that a *bilek* possesses some other unique magical or ritual object, and if this is the case, this too is retained by the senior section. Again, it is the senior section which continues to occupy the family's old apartment, while the junior section sets about constructing a new apartment, joined to one end or other of the longhouse. 592 422 178 782

73. With these few exceptions all the other property of the *bilek* is partible, and its apportionment is in accord with the relative size and composition of the two sections resulting from the partition. Thus, if each section contains one married sibling—the property is divided as equally as possible between them. On the other hand, if the senior section contains two siblings, and the junior section only one, the apportionment is then in the proportion of two to one, and so on. The share allotted to affines depends on the period of time for which they have been members, and during which they have contributed to the prosperity of the *bilek*. Cases do occur in which long-standing affines are granted exactly the same share as natal members. Plantations of rubber and fruit trees are also usually divided, though it is sometimes agreed that both sections should continue to have equal access to the crop of fruit trees. Similarly, both sections have the right to farm land acquired by the family (by the felling of virgin jungle) prior to partition having taken place. That is, there is a joint sharing of rights but no actual partition of the land itself. Land cleared by their section subsequent to partition however, is independently owned. This situation will be discussed in detail when we come to the subject of land tenure and usage. 592 421

74. More often than not the apportionment of property is carried out by the members of the two families themselves in private conference. But cases do occasionally happen in which feelings run so high that agreement cannot be reached, and in this event, the *tuai rumah* and 592 578 421

other elders of the long-house are called in to act as assessors and adjudicators. They meet in the apartment of the family concerned, where all the non-personal, inheritable property has been heaped up in the centre of the room. All the members of the family are also present, and the composition of the two sections seeking partition is well known to all taking part. After a brief interchange of views, the value of the various items of the assembled property is formally assessed, and they are then allotted in the proper proportions to the two sections. The property is at once taken into custody by the two groups. In addition to the adjudicating elders, there are always a number of other outside witnesses (i.e. other members of the long-house), and so the partition becomes a final and binding settlement. The occasion concludes by one of the elders waving a cock, in blessing, over the divided sections of the family, and uttering the prayer that henceforward they will live in concord and their affairs prosper.

75. The share (*ungkop*) of the *bilek* property which a sibling receives when partition occurs must not be confused with the *pemai* inheritance, received by an out-marrying sibling. (c.f.: Para. 52). These are entirely distinct entities. To illustrate this let us take the example of Jilap and Landun, a married couple of Rumah Sibat. In about 1948, Jilap, a young man of some 22 years of age, married Landun, a girl of the same long-house, and took up residence in her *bilek*, which was only a few doors away from his own. Soon after Jilap had settled down to married life, he received from his natal *bilek-family* the following articles, constituting his *pemai*:

1 Chinese jar (*tajau rusa*),
1 brass box (*baku*),
2 woven fabrics (*pua kumbo*),
2 ikat skirts (*kain kebat*).

This *pemai* represented the final fulfilling of Jilap's rights of inheritance as a member of his natal *bilek*. Landun's family consisted of her father, Ingan, and her mother, Leyang, and their five sons and daughters, of whom Landun was the eldest. About a year after their marriage had been contracted, disagreement arose over the contribution which Landun and Jilap were making to the farm work of the family, and it was decided that they should set up a *bilek* of their own. By this time Landun had given birth to a son, and there was every prospect that her marriage with Jilap would be a lasting one. An unoccupied room adjoining the *tanju* of the long-house (the property of Jilap's father), was made available to them, and here, in 1950, the young couple set up a menage of their own, and started farming independently. In this case, partition involved the breaking away of a daughter, her husband and child, from her natal family consisting of father, mother, three brothers and a sister. The portion of the *bilek* property allotted to Landun and Jilap was:

1 Chinese jar (*tajau lalang*),
1 brass box (*baku*),
1 large plate,
15 ordinary plates (*pinggai*),
4 bowls (*jaiong*),
30 saucers (i.e. sufficient for preparing a *piring lapan*, the standard ritual offering of the Iban),
2 cooking pots (*priok*),
1 cooking pan (*kali*),
2 bush knives (*duku*),
1 hunting spear (*sangkoh*),
2 fishing spears,
1 large floor mat,
2 *padi* carrying baskets (*lanji*),
2 padi storing baskets (*baka*),
2 winnowing trays (*chapan*),
1 harvesting basket (*sintong*),
1 dibbling stick (tugal),
padi seed, etc., and
ritual plants (*sengkenyang*).

If Landun's siblings had not been so many, she would have undoubtedly received a larger inheritance, but her parents were well aware, that with four remaining children, partition would probably recur in subsequent years. However, the property which Landun did receive was certainly sufficient to equip the young couple in setting up a household of their own, and this is the minimum requirement which partition must always meet.

76. In the normal course of events, the partition of a *bilek* takes place during the period between the end of the harvest and the felling of the jungle for the next season's farm, sometime, that is, during the months of April, May or June. This enables the *padi* crop to be apportioned between the two sections, and for each of them to make the necessary arrangements for their farms of the ensuing year. It is significant to note that the process of partition is often initiated by two section of a family establishing separate farms a year or two in advance of the formal apportion-

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A second principal reason for fluctuation in the composition of the bilik-family is related to bilik partition.[7] Partition occurs when an individual or family removes from the natal bilik to found a new, separate bilik. That this is common may be ascertained by reference to Table 18.A.1 in which nine of the 15 longhouses surveyed showed an increase in the number of bilik-families, the principal cause being partition. Partition arises primarily from the development of collateral nuclear families with divergent and incompatible interests. Within the bilik, property is divided into common and private. In the more traditional longhouse, common property included temuda' (farm lands cleared by ancestors), fruit trees, rubber and pepper gardens, brassware, large Chinese jars, antique bowls and plates, ceremonial garments and ornaments, pua' kumbu' (woven blankets) and other woven materials, augury sticks, charms and medicines, sacred and ordinary rice seed, and human skulls (antu pala'). In more modern houses, such as Rumah Nyala, Imba and Nyelang, common property also includes wrought iron furniture with vinyl-covered, foam rubber cushions, glass-front cupboards, desks, vanity tables, and dining room suites. At Rumah Nyala, it even includes a share in the combo instruments, purchased at a cost of $1700 by the entire longhouse community, and the electrical wiring and fluorescent tubes, as well as the dynamo (Iban dilemo) for powering the electric supply.

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[7] See Freeman's excellent discussion on "Partition," 1970:41-55.

A,A [See p. 254--Analyst]

000 (Iban dileno) for powering the electric supply.

591 Although the individual may acquire personal property for himself,
621 he is expected to contribute to the common property of the bilik of which
421 he is a member. And, in this comes a source of conflict that not in-
578 frequently results in partition. One member may feel that he or his
[202] family is contributing more than another. Resentments smoulder and issue forth in gossip about the other party, who overhears or is told of the gossip.[8] Insults are inferred and added to real injuries, arising from the strain and drain on psychic energies of more or less constant contact (selalu bepeda', always in sight, is the Iban expression with meaning near to "familiarity breeds contempt"). In the end, the individual or family
[787] comes to the decision that no longer can they tolerate the situation. The decision may be articulated in a dream, impelling the individual or family to move. Or, it may be expressed through conversation, in which the parties concerned seek the best solution to their conflict. Not infrequently, the decision to remove is reached in the heat of anger, and the individual or family will leave being scarcely on speaking terms with those who stay.

591 Upi ak Paran (Bilik No. 14) of Rumah Nyala moved his family out of
621 his natal bilik, after he remarried following the death of Sunta, his first
587 wife. Sunta was the sister of Pengarah Chundi (Bilik No. 15), both children

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[8] Gossip among the Iban, as with all people, is a viable means of indirectly releasing hostilities. The Iban dislike direct confrontations, such encounters being banned under positive and negative sanctions and reinforced with supernatural taboos (penti pemali).

000 heir, through a second marriage of one of his parents.

592 While it is true, as Freeman writes, that,

> "at any given moment in time, every Iban - man, woman, or child - is a member of one particular bilek-family, and one only,"

it is equally true that membership in a particular bilik can be extremely transient, and that the bilik-family is an open-ended group, to which individuals may attach or detach themselves with minimal disruption. Thus, Linjong anak Umpi (Bilik No. 14) of Rumah Nyala, was adopted by Bangai, his late mother's mother. After living with Bangai for a short time, he removed from her bilik and took up residence with his brother, Juna, where his jural residence is now recognized. Within a short time, he was the member of three different bilik-families. We now will consider each of the principles of recruitment to membership in the bilik-family in turn.

1. Birth

[851] [855] Each child at birth becomes a member of his father's and mother's bilik, assuming that they have not divorced prior to his birth. Ultimate responsibility for the care, nurture and education of the child rests with [421] the bilik of his birth. By virtue of his birth, the child acquires all [681] [858] rights to property, so long as he remains a member of that bilik. Until a child is ten years old, he is not subject to fine (adat), being considered too young to know anything (agi' jugau).

591 virilocal residence by 20 to 17 cases. Overall in the three houses,
162 there are 71 cases in which men are living uxorilocally, or 54.6 per cent of the total, 57 cases in which women are living virilocally, or 43.8 per cent of the total, and two cases of neolocal residence, or 1.6 per cent of all the residences surveyed in the three houses.

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421 When a person marries out of his bilik-family, he loses all rights
428 of inheritance by his attachment to the bilik-family of his spouse. At the time of his separation from the family, he is given a portion (pemai') of the family's common property, consisting of one jar (tajau sigi') and one bronze gong (bebendai sigi'). If the family has an abundance of farmland and rubber or pepper gardens, he may be given an amount of land, the basis for division being one acre for the child who marries out to two acres for the child who remains in the bilik to care for the parents. One aspect of the rights of the child who marries out that must be emphasized is the privilege of returning to farm land felled by his ancestors. Marrying out does not result in a surrender of rights to cultivate land in one's natal bilik-family.

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606 When an individual marries into his spouse's bilik, he acquires
607 equal rights with other members of that family. Thus, although he maintains the rights mentioned above of cultivating land held by his natal bilik-family, this privilege rarely is activated because he receives rights to land through his spouse (bisi' bagi ari bini tauka laki ia). Not infrequently, the affine assumes the most important role in the family.

595 829 Monogamous marriages continue to be the general form of marriage among the Iban, and those men who enter into polygamous unions are thought of by their peers as deviant, forsaking the traditional ways of the Iban for the ways of other groups (ukai jalai kami Iban).

582 612 In stating a preference for marriage, older Ibans confirmed that the traditional rule is that it should be with a member of one's bilateral kindred. A number of factors are adduced in support of marriage within 582 the kindred. First, marriage between close kinsmen, for example, first 421 cousins, prevents loss of property through division. 612

> "It's best if first cousins marry, lest property be divided to other people. For example, if we two were brothers, it would be well for our children to marry, for what's your's is mine and mine is your's, it would be kept together and not divided."[14]

The economic principle upon which the desire for marriage of close kinsman is predicated is succinctly expressed in the phrase, saum buah, saum tanah (sharing fruit, sharing land). This phrase, which is commonly used in describing the advantage of marriage between close kinsmen, was volunteered independently by three different informants. In relating this principle to the proscription of the marriage of siblings, Tuai Rumah Ampan said that,

> "marrying first-cousins permits the couple to share in land and gardens from both kin-groups. This wouldn't

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[539] [14] Iban text: Manah agi' enti diri' petunggal sakali' jadi enggaika reta dibagi ngagai orang bukai. Sema' jako', tua diri' madi', anak nuan enggau anak aku badas jadi, laban utai nuan utai aku, enda' dibagi, enda pechah.

582 421 612 be so if siblings married, for they would receive only within their own bilik; hence, this is a tabooed union (jadi mali)."

582 602 612 A second reason given for preference of marriage within the kindred is that it permits maintenance of kinties. Marriage with non kinsmen weakens the network of the kaban both by failure to unite with kinsmen as well as by the introduction of strangers.

> "If we marry with strangers, people whom we don't know, we already are removing ourselves at some distance from our kinsmen. That's why we always (sic) look for a close kinsman, so that we won't break the ties (putus tali)."

582 554 612 789 A third reason offered by every informant with whom marriage regulations were discussed was of a more supernatural nature, but related to the first two reasons already discussed. Marriage within the kaban permits marriage with a person who has the evil eye or in some other way is a bearer of misfortune. It also insures that one's child or relative doesn't marry down, with some one of a lower class. How is the person of [558] lower class, the bearer of the evil eye recognized? The person of a lower class is a member of a family which never has enough rice, a descendant [157] of debt slaves, or a person plagued by failure. The Iban are highly motivated towards demonstrative achievement and, traditionally, the single ultimate criterion of success was a bountiful harvest year after year. 561 426 Occasionally, poor harvests and other misfortunes combined to produce circumstances in which a man had to become a debt slave (ulun leka rian or ulun buah rian) in order to survive. The debt slave was considered of